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ATWOOD

Lincoln





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In Memoriam.

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DISCOURSES

IN COMMEMORATION OF

ABRAHAM LINCOLN,

PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES,

DELIVERED IN THE

SOUTH CHURCH, SALEM,

April 16th, and June 1st, 1865,

BY THE PASTOR,

Rev. E. S. Atwood.

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SALEM:

PRINTED AT THE OFFICE OF THE SALEM GAZETTE.

1865.



*The Nation's Loss.*

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A DISCOURSE

DELIVERED ON THE SUNDAY MORNING AFTER THE

ASSASSINATION OF

PRESIDENT LINCOLN.

IN THE

SOUTH CHURCH, SALEM.

April 16, 1865.

By REV. E. S. ATWOOD.

PASTOR.



SALEM:

PRINTED AT THE OFFICE OF THE SALEM GAZETTE.

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# S E R M O N .

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“THE BEAUTY OF ISRAEL IS SLAIN UPON THY HIGH PLACES : HOW ARE THE MIGHTY FALLEN.”

We come into the house of God this morning, under a cloud so dense, so dark, so appalling, that, like children in the night, we know not which way to turn. A week ago, and these walls rang with jubilant strains of praise for the victories we had won, and for the foregleams of peace, that shone along the path,—but to day God gives us for beauty, ashes—for the oil of joy, mourning—for the garment of praise, the spirit of heaviness. In the very hour of our triumph, a blow as terrible as it was unforeseen comes with stunning force to remind us that the brightest morning may widen into the darkest day ;—that it is not in man who walketh, to direct his steps. Our good and wise President, the Father of his people, endeared to all whose esteem and affection was worth having, by his many virtues and few faults, by his wise, cautious, kindly policy, in the very moment when his almost superhuman efforts in behalf of liberty and law seemed fruiting into success, has fallen by the

hand of a cowardly assassin, and millions are orphaned by the stroke. Enviroined with a nation's affection, with thousands ready to bare their breasts to shield him from the bolt that would do him hurt.—in an unguarded hour, keen scented treason tracks him to his place of fancied security, and with dastardly outrage and cruel wrong, strikes stiait at his life. True, others high in place and power, suffer with him, but what are they? What is any man's life in comparison with his? All other grief is poor beside this the great grief, all other sorrow is swallowed up and lost in this overflowing flood.

And yet it is not for *him* that our tears fall. The going out of his life was not the lengthened decline of manly powers, the sad fading out of strength into imbecility, the protracted hopeless fight for breath, whose bitterness brings a relief when it is ended. He went through no dim twilight lengthening into night, but as the tropic sun makes swift transition from day to darkness—his sorrow endured but for a night—

“ And when the sun in all his state  
Illumed the Eastern skies,  
He passed through glory's morning gate  
And walked in Paradise.”

We were spared the long hours of anxious watching—the tasking alternations of hope and fear—the suspense that is worse than certainty. Better for him, better for us, better for the whole nation

—that if the blow must fall, it should be sharp and decisive. We at once are set face to face with our grief; and for him, it was a brief transit from labor to reward.

He has gone too in the supreme summer of his renown. The index finger pointed to high noon on the dial of his fame. He leaves behind him an unsullied record. Some men tarry too long. Many outlive their greatness. The mistakes and follies of their last years so cloud their earlier renown, that history knows not, whether most to blame or praise. There are but few whose claims to reverent affection are not tarnished by a long lease of power—and we are fain to

“ Walk backward with averted gaze  
And hide their shame.”

Not so with him. We may unroll his record in the broadest day. An ardent patriot—a wise statesman—too honest for the chicanery of diplomatic art—too steadfast in his purpose to do right to be moved by fears and bribes—a patient man, knowing that events must have time to ripen, and willing to wait—inflexible in resolve, holding right on towards the good he set himself to work out, always willing to receive counsel, but weighing it well before he acted upon it—his greatest fault, a heart too large and kindly—too sanguine in its trust of human nature—with qualities like these it is no marvel that he should have grown in men’s estimation, till he stood in the front rank of rulers. His greatness

was no accident. It was compacted by honest growth—and the impress of it cannot pass away like a title or a hereditary crown. We looked for it to stretch up to larger heights, to put on more stalwart proportions—we fondly prophesied of future plans and measures, that would widen and brighten his fair fame—but God said, “It is enough”—“Well done good and faithful servant”—“Come up higher.” He has left to history the legacy of an unsullied name—he has furnished the generations to come, with the example of a man uncorrupted by position, unspoiled by power—who with almost unequalled opportunities never abused them—so scant a self-seeker, that he never saw, or seeing, never turned his chances to account. It is something for a nation to have given such a man to the world—it is much for a man to have so proved himself worthy of the respect of future generations. We have no tears for him, who has shown himself so meet for the canonization of history.

But for ourselves we may well weep. These trappings of sorrow—this sable, fringing and shadowing the nation’s flag—these wailing Misereres that rise in the place of the joyful Easter Jubilates that we thought to sing—they are but poor symbols of the grief that lies too deep for tears. What has he not been to us—this high priest of Freedom—murdered at the altar? Remember the turmoil, the terror, the chaos of the hour, when he came with his manly self reliance, and calm faith in God, to lay his strong hand upon the helm. The nation was in ter-

rible straits—disintegrating every hour, threatening to fall into utter incoherence—with only a wreck of rubbish to mark the place where it stood. There was no army, no navy, no weapons, no finance, and a haughty and confident foe were thundering at the gates of the capitol. Pettifogging statesmen were splitting straws, and weighing words, to find out whether a nation had the right of self preservation—timid men were making overtures of submission and peace. *He* came, and his first words had the ring of resolve—“Seventy-five thousand men to the front”—and as though a Deity had spoken the North swarmed with armies. The whole land awoke, and hope and courage beat in every breast. Then came defeat, and as our routed hosts were driven back, men asked what next? “Three hundred thousand more,”—and so on till a half a million moved at his orders. Generals proved weak, and in spite of their prestige and the popular esteem, they were removed to make room for others till the true leaders were found. Foreign nations frowned defiance—but his earnest purpose and matchless tact foiled their schemes of aggression. With a wisdom as far reaching as it was sagacious, led by events instead of anticipating them, he worked for sure rather than swift results, and when his preparations were completed, when the continent shook with the tread of his armies, when his fleets covered the sea, when the coffers of state were full, when the tried generals were found, then came the crushing blows that reduced fort after fort, that conquered state after

state, that routed army after army, till treason was left without head or home. What has not this man done for us under God? Safe through the Red Sea, across the waste howling wilderness, to the borders of the Promised Land he has led us. From the Pisgah height of the hour, God permitted him to look upon its goodliness, which he was not to enjoy. As we take up once more the line of march, with our unproved Joshua at the head, we do well to water with tears the grave of our Moses, whom we leave behind.

The oppressed and down-trodden slave has reason to mourn. While cautious politicians, and men who had not outgrown their old fealty to a Southern oligarchy, were clamorous against any attempt to lay hands upon this consolidated iniquity—while army officers were returning trembling fugitives to their old taskmasters—while cabinet officers, belying old professions, were dissenting and dissuading—the man who dared to do right, sat down and wrote the Proclamation of Freedom, that snapped the fetters of toiling millions, and broke open the prison house of despair. With the stroke of his pen he created a race, and pointed them the upward road to manhood and civilization. His name became a household deity. Over a thousand miles of territory there went up nightly, from every bondman's hut, a prayer for God's blessing to rest upon him. They looked at morning to catch the gleam of his coming banners; they listened at night for the tread of his advancing hosts; and though they waited long, they

knew the man, and the promise was fulfilled—the deliverance dawned at last. To their personal affection and trust, the nation's Flag was only the symbol of his individual power ; the marching armies only the creatures of his good will. They called him Master, not of constraint, but of choice. They crowded to catch sight of his face, they coupled his name with that of the world's Redeemer, and he was, in a sense, *their* Messiah, the seed of the woman, appointed to bruise the head of the serpent, in whose folds so many generations of their race had been crushed. It was a bitter day for them when their deliverer fell. Other men may confirm to them their promised rights, but his heart conceived, and his brain compacted, the plan that solved the problem, before which so many wise and brave men had stood bewildered and aghast.

And there is yet another class in the land who have occasion to grieve—the rebels and traitors in whose interest he was slain. No other man was disposed to look so leniently on their deserts ; to deal so kindly with their sins. Treason has lost its most considerate enemy ; the man who has stood, and would have continued to stand, between them and the meting out of a too severe justice. Stern and unrelenting as he was in war, he loved better the office of a peace-maker. He would have smoothed the way of return to amity and union ; his hand would have sown the seeds of forgetfulness on the graves of the past ; he would have tempered justice with mercy, and taught even vengeance to say

amen. Their maniac and fiendish act has lifted into power a man who has felt the cords of rebellion tightening on his own neck; who has been stripped of his property and driven from his home, by the men with whom he is now to make terms. It will be small wonder if he prove himself plastic in the hands of an indignant people, and execute justice without stint or measure.

History offers but a single parallel to the greatness of the crime. The same misfortune once before befell a Republic struggling for national life. And the parallel is so exact that as one reads the description of it in the History of the Netherlands, a few changes of names and dates make it an exact record. "William, Prince of Orange," writes Mr. Motley, "had been murdered on the 10th of July, 1584. It is difficult to imagine a more universal disaster, than the one thus brought about by the hand of a single obscure man. For years the character of the Prince had been expanding steadily, as the difficulties of his situation increased. Habit, necessity, and the natural gifts of the man, had combined to invest him at last with an authority which seemed more than human. There was such general confidence in his sagacity, courage and purity, that the nation had come to think with his brain and act with his hand. It was natural, that for an instant, there should be a feeling as of absolute and helpless paralysis. Whatever his *technical* attributes in the polity of the nation, there is no doubt that he stood there the head of a common-

wealth, in an attitude such as had been maintained by but few of the kings or chiefs or high priests of history. Assassination had produced in this instance, after repeated disappointments, the result at last, which had been so anxiously desired. The ban of the Pope and the offered gold of the King, had accomplished a victory greater than any yet achieved by the armies of Spain, brilliant as had been their triumphs on the blood-stained soil of the Netherlands." And yet, though thus left without their natural head, a guiding Providence raised up men for the emergency, and they fought through bitter years of war, to an assured liberty and peace.

As we feel in the first shock of this calamity our hearts almost sinking to despair, we may take courage as we read this record of a departed century, and of an old struggle out of which come some of the seeds of our own nationality. As our departed President said after one of our sore defeats—"God still lives, and the people." We take up his prophetic words. Being dead, he yet speaketh. There is no reason for terror. There is a might still living in freemen's arms. There are disciplined hosts who, with every instinct of patriotism, and the skill of veterans, stand between the nation and mortal peril. There are matchless generals, every throb of whose pulse is for liberty and law. There are statesmen wise in counsel, and true to freedom, who plan for the common weal. And more than all, there is an Omnipotent God, of sleepless justice, whose eye, never closed, watches our welfare. Away with

cowardly forebodings. They are the phantoms that scare children from their sleep, but which vanish before the gaze of resolute manhood. We have stern work before us, and a stern challenge summons us to duty.

We are to make inquisition for blood. Who perpetrated this outrage? and in whose interest? We are told that the authorities are on the track of certain individuals, and have offered large rewards for their apprehension. Yes, these are the technical criminals, but where are the originators and abettors of the conspiracy? This scheme of murder was not coined in some fanatic's brain. These hunted fugitives were but the facile tools, in unseen hands behind the curtain. The plot has been four years in maturing. Who waylaid and strove to hinder, with bowie knife and pistol, the President's first entry to the capital? Who has taken men, guilty of no crime but loyalty, and shot and hung and tortured them with unnameable horrors? Who has herded helpless prisoners in filthy dungeons, and wretched stockades, and subjected them to all the horrors of starvation, adding to this, every device of cruelty, that might put fiends to the blush? Who has been writing to foreign sheets, that we were speedily to know in an unsuspected way what their vengeance could accomplish? Before high Heaven, I charge the leaders of the Rebellion, and their aiders and abettors, North and South, with this foul and most unnatural crime. The bells will clash merrily in the remnant of the Confederacy, and the

blood-thirsty crowd will shout themselves hoarse with savage joy, when the tidings reach them, of their deliberate vengeance accomplished. The pious hypocrite who heads them, will stay long enough in his flight to dictate an order for Te-Deums to be sung in the churches. The boasted chivalry, the scum and refuse of humanity, will gloat large-eyed and eager-eared, over the details of the dying agonies of the great and good and wise President whom God has taken to himself. Their brutal shouts, borne on the far Southern winds that should faint with the burden they carry, will mingle with your tolling bells, and the sad sounds of your grief. And when you have borne your common Father to his burial, and laid him down with tender and pious care, in his honored grave, that is to be the grave of new pilgrimages in the ages to come, then sleek, complaisant men, will whisper in your ears—"Deal gently with these erring brethren. Bury the past in forgetfulness, and yield something to their prejudices, for the sake of union and peace." *And will you do it?* Woe, woe, to this land, if it lay not judgment to the line, and justice to the plummet. I ask for no vengeance. Vengeance is *mine*, I will repay, saith the Lord. But I plead for *Justice, Truth and Righteousness*. By this mute symbolism of woe, that speaks with an eloquence that no human lips can equal—by a nation's bitter grief, whose last consummate blossom is ripe—by the uncoffined form of the brave, true man, who lies in the capitol, scarred with the gaping wounds that treason gave—by all

that can move good men to action,—I *charge you stand firm*, come what will. Your leader *died* for liberty. A costlier sacrifice no nation ever gave. Shall the pleadings of ease or gain, or the craft of wily men, swerve you from a like loyalty? Let not the babble of *magnanimity* be heard in our streets. The sword in the clenched hand, and the strong right arm, must dictate terms of truce. Blot every word but *submission* out of the vocabulary of negotiation. And so in God's Providence, that chastens us to-day for our too easy virtue, the hour will come, when ancient foemen will mingle their tears over the grave of their common friend, and the fair form of Freedom, on whose altar he was sacrificed, will stand white-robed and lustrous beside the spot, herself a nobler monument than beaten gold or speaking marble, raised to his honor by a grateful and reverent nation.

So let us rise up from our grief—shaking off this dull pressing sense of pain—or deadening it by action. The issues of the hour permit us to tarry long at no man's grave. The stern voice of Duty cries—"Let the dead bury their dead, but follow thou me." The innocent blood that was spilled is a fresh baptism, consecrating us to service. We may not refuse to hear the summons. Let us rise up chastened by our deep affliction—stronger, braver, holier men and women—feeling more than ever that we are not our own—stripped still more of our reliance upon men—more patient to endure. The father sleeps—but the children live, and live to struggle and to conquer.

Above all, let us rise up with quickened faith in God, and the country's cause. He has rolled away the clouds before now—he will do it again. We are cast down but not destroyed—perplexed but not in despair. God lives, and while he lives we may hope and be strong. The nation stoops to day to drink of the stream of Marah, and cries out at the bitter draught, but to-morrow the waters will be sweet and clear. Our Flag is not *all* shrouded in mourning, we but border its edges with sable—and out of its funereal fringes, its radiant stripes still gleam with their symbolism of promise, its stars still shine from their field of azure. Our sorrow is not our history, only the dark hem that shades for a little its brightness. Over the sad pall that covers our buried hopes bloom the bright flowers of resurrection.\*

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\* On the Communion Table, which was draped with black, stood a profusion of white roses, in wreaths and clusters.



# The President's Record.

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## A DISCOURSE

DELIVERED ON THE DAY OF THE

NATIONAL FAST,

IN THE

SOUTH CHURCH, SALEM,

JUNE 1, 1865,

BY REV. E. S. ATWOOD,

PASTOR.

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SALEM:

PRINTED AT THE OFFICE OF THE SALEM GAZETTE.

1865.



## S E R M O N .

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JOB XVI, 18, 19.

“O EARTH COVER NOT THOU MY BLOOD. AND LET MY CRY HAVE NO PLACE. BEHOLD MY WITNESS IS IN HEAVEN, AND MY RECORD IS ON HIGH.”

Every great man writes his own epitaph. His contemporaries endeavor to do it for him, but they are apt to run so much to extremes—and exaggerate either his virtues or his vices—that their estimates must be taken with allowance. A friendly partisan will go to the extent of canonization, ascribing all excellences, human and divine, to his idol—hardly allowing imperfection enough to prove him mortal. A hostile pen will write him down, as far as the friend wrote him up. From either side, he is viewed through the bewildering mist of prejudice or partiality, which permits men only to be seen as trees walking, and one must needs take a general average of all opinions, to approximate to an accurate judgment. Fortunately, however, we are not shut up to this complicated work. The great man writes his own epitaph. He stamps a certain impress on his own age—he gets a greater or less leverage upon the future—he leaves behind him the record of a character, whose prominent traits admit

of no mistakes—and most commonly bequeathes to coming generations some elaboration of words or works that remains as his lasting monument. All other testimonials are changing and transitory, but this self declaration of his life, is a “record written on high”—graven as with a pen of iron, and the point of a diamond, ineffaceable forever.

As we gather again to-day to sing dirges for our honored dead, to commemorate with due observance, the worth of departed greatness, this fact may serve to fix the thought of the hour. The tablet erected in St. Paul's Cathedral to Sir Christopher Wren, the architect of the mighty pile, bears the inscription, “If you seek his monument look around you.” So let the votive offering read, which we raise to-day to the memory of the martyred President. His own acts, are his best and all sufficient eulogy. He needs no fulsome adulation—no overwrought panegyric. His simple worth is his patent of nobility, his title to a historic throne.

Considered simply as a *man*, whose character was shaped by republican theories and institutions, his record is noteworthy. He was a kind of first fruits of American Democracy. There has been a widely credited delusion across the sea, that gentle blood and aristocratic training were indispensable to the making of the best sort of humanity. A comprehensive statesmanship that could rise above vulgar prejudice, and partisan interests, was supposed to be impossible, outside of certain lines of caste. Every European government is founded on the presump-

tion, that it is not safe to trust supreme power in the hands of any but the elect few. The whole class-system of the Continent is a protest against the dignity of man as man. But here is a true child of the people—of humble birth and surroundings, owing nothing to the class of externals so highly prized—tutored after the rough wilderness fashion, brought up to swing the axe and ply the oar—nursing great thoughts within him as he tracks through the forest, or tides down the rapids—now pursuing the peaceful avocations of his humble life, and now riding foremost in the fierce raids of border war—making his way at last with such scant helps as he could compass into the mysteries of jurisprudence—then passing from one rude court of justice to another—growing all the time in power and fame—assisted and cheered by the generous nature of our institutions whose honors are offered to the humblest aspirant, till at last he reaches the steps of the Presidential mansion, and an according nation opens wide the doors to his coming. And now comes the testing which is to show whether this man is a fortunate political trickster, or the true heir-apparent to the throne. The winds of anarchy and rebellion are let loose—the surges of civil war, tumultuous, threatening, blood red, rise roaring to the skies. Of the crew some are mutinous, some terror-stricken—the bravest, doubtful. Who is this man that stands supreme like a God at the helm—steering right on through the wild swirl of the waves—when all the pilotage of studied statesmanship is at fault, simple

*right*, the pole-star that burns before him, through the blackest cloud—patriotic self-devotion, the compass that keeps him to his course—fearless of disaster, sure of reaching his haven—holding on and holding out, till the storm has spent its rage, and the sea goes down—and the peaceful continent rises and builds itself above the dip of the waves, before the rejoicing sight? Who is this master mariner unknown to fame, who out-pilots the great captains of history? Who, but the child of the wilderness, the woodman's lad—the boatman's boy of old—matured by republican institutions, till he comprehends state-craft by intuition, and dares beyond the ventures of the schools—and justifies his daring by success. After crediting all that is due to his native powers, it still remains undeniable that his greatness could have found expansion and reached ripeness under no other form of national life. As a prince of history he is purely and wholly of our making. His record is a perpetual answer, to the mocking question of monarchies and aristocracies—“Can any good come out of the Nazareth of Democracy?”

If we turn now from the simple man, to his exercise of some of the specific functions of his position, we find that he has an honorable record as a *teacher*. I have seen a caricature that represents him as a schoolmaster, setting copies for the kings, who fill the benches as pupils. The humorist's conception is pregnant with solemn meaning. He *has* discovered and taught a new element in the science of govern-

ment. As in strict jurisprudence, there is both statute and common law, so in the jurisprudence of empire, there is not only constitutional law but, over and above that, the higher common law of God. Imperial edicts and legislative enactments are not necessarily final. Yet vicious statesmanship has been wont to point to codes and canons, as the justification of the most iniquitous measures. The people have meekly bowed down to infamous enactments, titled with the sacred name of law, though their homage was given to some ugly Fetish, whose lineaments wore no trace of the Eternal Righteousness. They have been tutored, as one has said, into "an awful idea of law, as if it were some granite pillar around which the floating particles of human life aggregate themselves—as if men were the mere incidents of it." It is related of the Duke of Wellington, that he was wakened one night by a military officer, who came to report that a certain strategic movement was impossible. The Duke called for the order-book—and turning over the leaves answered at last—"Impossible? not at all impossible—why, it stands written in the Order Book." So statesmen have thought and taught, that there were no possibilities outside of the statute. Men must swear by the parchment, though in so doing they blasphemed God. The world had waited long for a man of power, who should teach that this theory was unrighteous and impolitic both, and who should push his teachings to a practical issue. It had watched and wearied for a ruler, who should en-

throne the law of Divine Right above the force of human statutes, and prove the wisdom of his estimate. Humanity cried out for a leader who should dare trust to the last results of simple truth, even though at the first, it should grind existing codes to powder. Nature was eloquent on this point. When the still chemistry of sunshine and summer winds and showers is powerless to rid the air of its poisonous vapors, God draws the bare white lightning from its scabbard, and wields it flaming on the forefront of the storm. History was full of witness, with its long roll of martyrs, whose stand for right as against law had built up some cause into massive strength. But where was the man that should teach that righteousness, even though contrary to the statute, was the first principle of *statesmanship*? He came at last. Our martyred President was the best exemplar of a ruler sworn to right that the world has ever seen. He was not born and bred to this high virtue—he did not grow into it all at once—not even swiftly—but he grew surely. He left the beaten path of precedent, at first with timid tread—but his footfall was firmer, with each forward step. Old and titled wrongs, buttressed by the Constitution, and Congressional enactments, blocked the way. Veteran statesmen warned, frightened conservatives prayed; but to no purpose. Which way the finger of God pointed, he went, though he trode compacts and compromises under his heel. It was the only road to victory. The legend runs concerning King Arthur, the

“Flower of kings,” that one day out of the boiling waves, a great white hand was thrust forth, holding a sword, bearing the inscription that he who wielded it should be invincible, and with that flashing blade Excalibur, he drove the heathen in utter rout. So out of the foaming surges of the hour, the hand of God reached forth the sword of Justice—the only blade that could end the strife—and grasping that, our leader drove our enemies, as chaff before the wind. Before all other expedients were abandoned to make place for the simple methods of truth and righteousness, everything was in confusion and at cross purposes. There was no unity of plan, and small advance towards the wished for triumph. Our infrequent victories evaporated in bulletins, and left no residuum of solid gain. But when the man we mourn said “Henceforth all for Justice,” a new power entered the contest. That was masterly statesmanship that made God an ally. From that hour, the multiplied forces of Omnipotence were auxiliaries. The muster roll held the names of the smallest part of the army. The morning reveille awakened a host unseen by mortal eyes. The long roll of the drums, set in battle array a great company out of sight. Side by side with the nation’s flag that waved over the charging lines, floated the ensign of the Lord of Hosts. It was no longer a doubtful strife. Every seeming defeat became a real victory, and triumph followed triumph till the last foe was subdued. And so this man has become schoolmaster to all future time, teaching the nations, that to

do *right* is the supremest wisdom of rulers. This is no longer an abstract theory of morals. It has been put to the test, and its virtue proved. Henceforth, godless statesmanship must be dumb before this shining witness. The testimony is in heaven, the record is on high, beyond the reach of effacing hands.

And what shall we say of this man as *Deliverer*? —the greatest known to history, whether we consider the number of the bondmen, or the soreness of the bondage. The world held no such infernal riot of wrong, as American slavery. High treason against God and man, it bred unnumbered crimes. Men heard the smothered cries that came up from the prison house of despair, but the sound was deadened by the din of the tramp with which they “kept step to the music of the Union.” Generations were born in the darkness of captivity, moaned and struggled a while for light, and died. Never till the earthquake of civil war shook the foundations of state, did the charnel house yawn, and reveal its nameless horrors. In its greed for gold and gain, the nation was coining the souls and bodies of men into money—and knew not what it was doing. Many a millionaire built his mansion on outrage and wrong. The timbers of his house were the bones of innocent victims. For every adorning, some brother man had groaned and smarted under the lash. And we laughed and sang and feasted, and glorified American Liberty, while this cruel work went on. It was a master stroke that burst open the prison

doors, and broke the fetters from these millions of bondmen. The scratch of the pen, in that quiet room, writing the Proclamation of Emancipation, will be heard for ever. History, like a vast whispering gallery, will reduplicate the sound and pass it on to the ages to come. It has been heard already the breadth of the continent and across the sea. It outran the tramp of armies and distanced the roar of cannon. It went down through the valleys of Virginia, through the pine barrens and the rice fields of the Carolinas—it rang along the everglades of Florida—it reached to the canebrakes and cotton fields of Louisiana—the Alleghanies echoed it to the Rocky Sierras, the Father of Waters caught up the sound and rolled it like sweetest music to the gulf. The glad winds blew it to every bondman's hut, to every haughty master's door—yea, even to hunted fugitives, hidden in reeking swamps or mountain fastnesses. And what sound had ever power like that, in whose hearing millions woke to manhood? Tyrants and oppressors trembled—but the poor, the despised, the outcast, the downtrodden, hailed it with songs of jubilee, and a nation was born in a day.

Let Abraham Lincoln be known to posterity by no other name than that of the Great Emancipator, and his fame is secure. No other man ever dared so much in such a cause. In one sense he risked everything. He had not numbered his friends, but he knew that his enemies were many and strong. Jealous ambition was eager to cast him down from

his high position. Partisan clamor was loud against the measure. Threats and abuse were lavished in unstinted abundance. Prudent counsellors, who had the good of the country at heart, doubted the wisdom of his course. It might cost him all that public men hold dear. But he held the fetters of four millions of bondmen in his hand—and *he broke them* with a word. Never was grander blow struck, and never was brave and good deed more richly rewarded. The blessings of myriads ready to perish, descended like gracious dew upon his head. Treason staggered under the mighty stroke. A reverent people woke to a new sense of his greatness, and placed him once more in the highest seat of honor. The carping nations stilled their hisses, and owned his right to royalty. In that supreme hour of his glory, his potent pen wrote a witness in heaven and a record on high, of which the loftiest might be proud. Other men are enrolled in the chronicles of time as great conquerors, generals, scholars, monarchs, but history graves in deepest lines, on her whitest tablet, the name of Abraham Lincoln, the Emancipator of a nation.

With such a record as this, what place is there for formal eulogy? Need it be said that the honored life now closed, was a magnificent success? As man and ruler—as teacher—as deliverer, he stands before the august magistracy of the world's opinion, to receive no doubtful verdict. Whatever befalls the nation, *his* fame is secure. It takes nothing from the round fulness of his life that he did not live

to see the ripe harvest of his labors. The assassin's work was a failure if he hoped to balk him of his great name.

“ They *never* fail who die  
 In a great cause. The block may soak their gore ;  
 Their heads may sodden in the sun, their limbs  
 Be strung to city gates and castle walls,  
 But still their spirit walks abroad. Though years  
 Elapse, and others share as dark a doom,  
 They but augment the deep and sweeping thoughts  
 Which overpower all others, and conduct  
 The world at last to freedom.”

And with him it was a coronation act, that added the martyr's crown to the royal robe. It lifted him to a higher degree of exaltation. Peer before, to the great of the earth, he was admitted to the noble army that have sealed their faithfulness with their blood. It wanted but this triumphal ending to fill the measure of his renown beyond the possibility of waste or cavil.

And how shall we fitly reverence his memory? How testify to our appreciation of the work he has wrought for us? True, a grateful people has decreed to him royal honors. The whole land has been shrouded in mourning. The sable banners have been flung out from every wall. The sanctuaries of God have put on the weeds of woe. The marts of commerce and the halls of pleasure have robed themselves in sackcloth. The very streets have gathered blackness. The continent bowed its head and wept at his funeral hour. We have borne

him to his burial, all the long road from the Capitol to his far off Western home, through thronging thousands pressing to see if but the shadow of the dead President might fall on them as he passed—clearing the way before him with solemn pomp—sending after him on the night wind our wailing *Misereres*—till the grave received him out of our sight. And now we take this bright day from the garland of summer hours, to lay it as a new offering upon his tomb. A thousand monuments to his memory are builded already in the thoughts of a loving people; the nation accepts the sacred trust of his family. All this is much, but it is not all nor the best that is due to his worth.

A nation can pay no other tribute so honorable to its departed great men, as the pushing to completeness of their unfinished work. Our heroes live for us still, when they live and move in our theories and actions, and stir us to the great deeds which they purposed, but were not suffered to do. Their hopes and plans were more to them than empty fame. They strove with death, not because it robbed them of their renown, but because it hindered them from their will. To gather up the broken threads they left, and weave out their pattern to perfectness is the fittest reward our loving hands can bestow.

To-day from that far off grave, where the martyr sleeps, there swells up the voice, "Oh earth cover thou not my blood, so that my cry have no place." Let the words ring in our ears, let the illustrious dead live still, in the grand purpose of the

nation he helped to save. He toiled and died for liberty, but the great work is not yet accomplished. He spent and was spent, to establish the Republic on the firm basis of Immutable Righteousness. As a wise master builder, he has laid the foundation, and left it for others to build thereupon. His own patient hands, squared the corner stone of his noblest monument. The completion of his work will be nobler tribute to his worth, than tolling bells, and muffled drums, and sobbing cannon and vast processional pomp,—more even than the heaven-piercing shaft or massive mausoleum. Better the inscription in which living ennobled men stand as syllables and sentences, than all the stately measures of the studied epitaph—for over such immortal paragraphs no moss of forgetfulness can ever grow, and the effacing hand of time has no power.

And now at last the curtain drops upon the mortal man. Too long with our tears, our pageants, our vain words, we have hindered him from his rest. Take, oh Grave thy mighty prey.

“ Take him, oh Death, and bear away  
 Whatever thou can’st call thine own.  
 Thine image stamped upon his clay  
 Doth give thee that—but that alone.”

His mighty *soul* is still marching on. The inspiration of his life—the lessons of his greatness—the full orbéd splendor of his glory—fly wide as the flag he loved—far as the land he saved is known. He has grasped the true immortality. His witness is in heaven—his record is written on high.





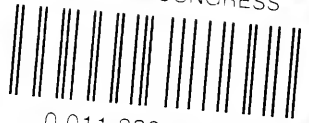








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